

# COURSE SYLLABUS

**COURSE: BEST PRACTICES FOR TEACHING AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS**

**PRESENTER: DR. JAWANZA KUNJUFU**

**CREDITS: 3 GRADUATE CREDIT**

## Course Overview

According to the most recent statistics, the dropout rate for African American males in US schools is over 50%. Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu links this trend with the disproportionate placement of these students in special education classes, a dearth of African American male teachers, and a failure to teach to African American boys' learning styles. In *Best Practices for Teaching African American Boys*, Dr. Kunjufu prepares educators to implement solutions to these problems in their classrooms and schools. He offers strategies for preventing the referral of students to special education that include constructing Afro-centric classrooms, integrating black male role models, supporting students' transitions through school and boyhood, accommodating these students' needs for curriculum that appeals to their interests and other characteristics, and designing instruction that exploits the best of their energy and intelligence. The course is punctuated by workshop discussions and classroom footage that illustrate the complexity of and solutions to the issues at hand, so that African American boys have the same opportunities for success as all of their peers.

## Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu

Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu was educated at Morgan State, Illinois State, and Union Graduate School. He has been a guest speaker at many universities throughout the U.S., and has been a consultant to many urban school districts. He has authored 33 books including national best sellers *Black Students: Middle Class Teachers; Keeping Black Boys out of Special Education; Raising Black Boys; 200 Plus Educational Strategies to Teach Children of Color*; and his latest title, *Understanding Black Male Learning Styles*. His work has been featured in *Ebony* and *Essence Magazine*, and he has been a guest on *BET* and *Oprah*. He is also a frequent guest on the Michael Baisden show.

## As you take this course, you will:

- Listen to experts.
- Watch real classroom learning.
- Read research and best practice.
- Access resources to support implementation.

## Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn about:

1. Essential statistics on African American males' status in education and society
2. Strategies to help preclude the disproportionate and destructive referrals of African American boys to special education
3. Strategies to fully engage and motivate African American boys throughout their K-12 schooling

## Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Convert your classroom into a productive learning environment for African American boys

2. Employ curricular and instructional strategies that increase student learning and affect student achievement

## Course Resources

Included within each unit are readings, resources, and materials available to download, save, and print. Please make sure you access all materials for each unit by clicking on the “Resources” tab to the right of the screen.

## Methods of Instruction and Evaluation

- Pre and Post surveys
- Videos (presentations consisting of interviews and classroom footage)
- Readings
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the course which ask participants to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and next steps for their practice)
- Checks for Understanding (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding)
- Discussion forums (prompts that engage participants in online dialogue with their cohorts)
- Mid-course Project and Final Capstone Project

## Academic Honesty

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else’s work as one’s own, and includes failing to cite sources for others’ ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult [plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org).

Grading Policy (using rubric 1-4 scale system)		Percentage of Course Credit	
Total grade for the course is a culmination of performance grades		Course grade is determined by the following	
<b>A:</b>	3.4 – 4.0	<b>Reflections</b>	15%
<b>B:</b>	2.7 – 3.3	<b>Checks for understanding</b>	25%
<b>C:</b>	2.0 – 2.6	<b>Mid-course Project</b>	25%
<b>F:</b>	<2.0	<b>Final Capstone project</b>	35%

In order to complete the requirements of the course, you must complete all course work (e.g., reflections, checks for understanding), including watching all videos and participating in all discussion forums. We do not award partial credit.

## Checks for Understanding and Reflection Rubric

Assessment	Underdeveloped (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
<b>Checks for understanding</b>	65% or below	66-79%	80-89%	90-100%
<b>Reflection Question</b>	<p>Participant has included little to no content indicating consideration and comprehension of course content.</p> <p>Participant has not addressed the questions posed.</p> <p>Participant has copied from the course transcript without synthesis or analysis.</p>	<p>Participant has included little that indicates consideration and comprehension of course content.</p> <p>Participant has answered most questions directly but some too briefly.</p>	<p>Participant has included appropriate content from the course content and made connections to practice.</p> <p>Participant has made thoughtful comments in direct response to the prompts.</p>	<p>Participant has provided rich detail and supporting examples from the course content and made specific connections to his/her practice.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Participant has made thoughtful comments in direct response to the prompts and created next steps to support his/her learning.</p>

## Course Calendar

<p><b>Unit 1: Introduction</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will learn statistics relevant to African American boys' status quo, priorities for hiring teachers for African American boys, and the media's effects on perceptions of African American boys and the impact of that in the classroom</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to analyze your classroom to determine if you are female- or male-centered, engage and promote appropriate educators for African American boys, and resist stereotypes</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Landsman, J. (2004). Confronting the Racism of Low Expectations. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 62 (3), 28-32. Retrieved from: <a href="http://www.ipsd.org/uploads/PDAC/Confronting_the_Racism_of_Low_Expectations.pdf">http://www.ipsd.org/uploads/PDAC/Confronting_the_Racism_of_Low_Expectations.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Reflection questions, Checks for Understanding</p>
<p><b>Unit 2: The 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Syndrome</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will learn reasons for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade decline of African American boys' academic progress, strategies to assist this population through key transitions, and effective and ineffective types of teachers</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to modify your curriculum and instruction to help prevent the 4<sup>th</sup> grade syndrome, and help African American boys make the transition into later grades and their different environments and demands.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Kunjufu, Jawanza. <i>Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys</i>. African American Images. Chicago, Illinois: 2005.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Reflection questions, Checks for Understanding</p>

<b>Unit 3: Reading</b>
<b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will learn why African American boys' limited literacy skills is "the civil rights issue of this generation", strategies for promoting this populations' engagement in reading and writing, and the phonics vs. whole language approach debate around teaching reading
<b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to improve the teaching of literacy skills to African American boys and embrace phonics over the whole language approach
<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Milner, H.R., Pabon, A., Woodson, A. &amp; McGee, E. (2013). Teacher Education and Black Male Students in the United States. <i>Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research</i>, 3(3), 235-263. doi: 10.4471/remie.2013.15</li> </ul>
<b>Assessments:</b> Reflection questions, Checks for Understanding
<b>Unit 4: Gender Differences</b>
<b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will learn about gender differences in learning patterns, and methods for accommodating gender differences in curriculum and instruction
<b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to accommodate gender differences in your curriculum and instruction
<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Weil, E. (2008). Teaching Boys and Girls Separately. <i>The New York Times Magazine</i>. Retrieved from: <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/02/magazine/02sex3-t.html?pagewanted=1&amp; r=1&amp;ref=magazine">http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/02/magazine/02sex3-t.html?pagewanted=1&amp; r=1&amp;ref=magazine</a></li> <li>□ Kunjufu, Jawanza. <i>Keeping Black Boys out of Special Education</i>. African American Images. Chicago, Illinois: 2005.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessments:</b> Mid-Course Project
<b>Unit 5: Special Education</b>
<b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will learn the impact of referrals to special education for African American boys, and strategies to preclude excessive and inappropriate referrals to special education
<b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to employ mainstreaming strategies to help preclude inappropriate referrals to special education of African American boys
<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Kunjufu, Jawanza. <i>Keeping Black Boys out of Special Education</i>. African American Images. Chicago, Illinois: 2005.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessments:</b> Reflection questions, Checks for Understanding
<b>Unit 6: Learning Styles</b>
<b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will learn the differences between right- and left-brain learners, distinctions between oral, kinesthetic, and tactile learners, methods of reaching students with different learning styles, and what constitutes a multicultural education
<b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to construct lesson plans that teach to students' different learning styles and provide students with a multicultural education
<b>Resource:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Kunjufu Learning Styles Model</li> </ul>
<b>Assessments:</b> Reflection questions, Checks for Understanding

## Unit 7: Reducing the Male Dropout Rate

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will learn why the dropout rate for African American males is so high and practical strategies for preventing dropping out

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to assist in preventing African American boys from dropping out of school, and develop multicultural, relevant lesson plans

**Readings:**

- Edward Earl Bell. "Graduating Black Males: A Generic Qualitative Study" *The Qualitative Report* 19.13 (2014). Retrieved at: <http://dredbell.com/images/blackmalesstudy.pdf>

**Assessments:** Reflection questions, Checks for Understanding

## Unit 8: An Ideal African American Male Classroom

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will the need for a rites-of-passage curriculum, the benefits of single-gender classrooms, and strategies for engaging African American male students

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to begin to construct rites-of-passage curricula and improve their teaching in relation to the needs of African American boys

**Readings:**

- Smith, Rosa A. (2005). Building a Positive Future for Black Boys. *American School Board Journal*.

**Assessments:** Final Capstone Project